



Minutes of a meeting of the Employment Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 26 May 2022.

PRESENT

Mr. P. Bedford CC
Mr. L. Breckon JP CC
Mrs. L. Broadley CC
Mr. B. Champion CC

Mr. B. Harrison-Rushton CC
Mr. D. Harrison CC
Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC

1. Appointment of Chairman.

It was moved by Mr D. Harrison CC and seconded by Mr. P. Bedford CC that Mr. L. Breckon JP CC be elected Chairman of the Employment Committee for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2023.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. L. Breckon CC be elected Chairman of the Employment Committee for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2023.

Mr. L. Breckon CC – in the Chair

2. Election of Deputy Chairman.

Nominations for the position of Deputy Chairman were sought. Mr. P. Bedford CC was nominated by Mr. R. Shepherd CC and seconded by Mr. D. Harrison CC.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. P. Bedford CC be elected Deputy Chairman of the Employment Committee for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2023.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2022 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

4. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 34.

5. Questions asked by members.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

6. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

7. Declarations of interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

Mrs. L. Broadley CC declared a non-registerable interest in agenda item 12 – Organisational Change, as her daughter was employed by the County Council.

8. People Strategy Update.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an update on the work currently undertaken to deliver the Council's People Strategy 2020-2024 following its approval by the Committee on 4 February 2021. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

It was noted that, when printed, page 21 of the people strategy would appear blank as interactive images would not appear.

The positive expected outcomes to arise from the delivery of the People Strategy 2020-2024 on both staff and the organisation were noted by members.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

- i. The results of the staff survey 2021 had been positive, however, strategic work would be put into place to address areas of less positive feedback, for example, from those who felt unfairly treated in work. A dedicated business partner would be allocated to each department to carry out follow up work in relation to the survey results and to produce specific action plans to achieve improvements where they would be needed. Members were pleased to note that corporate work around equalities would be carried out, including discussions with the BAME staff network, work to improve the experience of disabled staff, and that the County Council had made a commitment to becoming an anti-racist organisation.
- ii. The People Strategy would assist managers in supporting staff and monitoring performance and productivity more effectively. Managers would use a range of methods to track the performance and wellbeing of their staff, such as regular one to one meetings, wellbeing conversations, absence score cards, customer feedback and tracking key deliverables. Staff performance would be easier to measure in areas where activities would be tracked through numerical targets, such as the Customer Service Centre, rather than in teams where project working would be more common. Managers would focus on staff morale and what is being delivered and not rely on presenteeism.
- iii. The Ways of Working Programme would support the Council's strategic direction and a fundamental part of the people strategy would be to enable managers to manage staff remotely and in the workplace. There would be an emphasis placed on communicating and engaging with staff regularly so that individuals would not feel isolated. The Ways of Working programme would deliver financial and non financial benefits to the Council and personal benefits to staff, however, if a

manager identified that hybrid working would not be appropriate for particular staff or for a service, this would be reviewed.

- iv. Attendance Management data had not been available for the meeting due to technical challenges with the database. Members were informed that some data would be available to consider at the next meeting of the Employment Committee, however, it was likely that there would be some caveats, given the need to have all individual work schedules inputted. Staff absence had generally reduced, during periods of Covid restrictions, to below the target of 7.5 days per full time equivalent employee and had since increased by up to two days which was similar to the patterns seen in other local authorities.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the work carried out to date in implementing the Council's People Strategy be noted.
- b) That officers be requested to present attendance management data at the next meeting of the Employment Committee on 15 September 2022.

9. Update on Pay Award.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which informed of the action taken by the Chief Executive to implement a pay award for NJC and JNC employees, and the Chief Executive in order to meet the requirements of nationally agreed pay awards which covered the period April 2021 to 31 March 2022. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10', is filed with these minutes.

Members were informed that:

- i. The National Joint Council has agreed to give further consideration to negotiations on term time only arrangements, homeworking, mental health support and maternity and other related leave. These had been part of the negotiations but had not been agreed.
- ii. The full cost of implementing the 2021/22 pay offer would vary depending which services are included. If Leicestershire Traded Services and maintained schools are removed from calculations, the cost would be approximately £2.8million.
- iii. The pay negotiations for 2022/23 would likely begin later in the year than usual due to the delay in agreeing and implicating the 2021/22 pay award. A range of factors would need to be considered within the 2022/23 negotiations, including increases in the national living wage, high levels of inflation, the rising cost of living and fuel prices which would have an impact on take home pay and staff household budgets. The staff side pay claim was due to be submitted in early June, and a regional pay briefing on 21 June with the National Employers would explore the claim and discuss affordability with employers. The Council has for a number of years budgeted for a 2% annual increase in pay, however, given the expected impact of national factors it was felt likely that the outcome of negotiations may lead to a higher settlement, but still falling short of increases to the cost of living.

RESOLVED:

That the action taken in respect of the implementation of the pay awards for NJC and JNC employees, and the Chief Executive for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 be noted.

10. Implications of New Armed Forces Legislation.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive which informed of the implications of the new Armed Forces Bill 2021/22 (the Bill), and the delivery of the wider Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) pledge by the Council. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 11', is filed with these minutes.

In a response to a question about the number of reservists working for the County Council, it was explained that the total number across the organisation was not known because those records were not kept centrally, however, in future the County Council would have the ability to record and report on this information. The Ministry of Defence would automatically notify the Council if one of their employees becomes a Reservist. This was known as Employer Notification. The Ministry of Defence would also notify the Council in advance of an employee being called for operations which would assist the Council when considering resource implications and in preparing contingency arrangements.

Members were advised that a report, to update on the implementation the Bill, including any legislative changes and of the Council's response to the implementation, would be brought to a future meeting of the Employment Committee once the Armed Forces Bill 2021/22 had been implemented.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the possible implications of new a Bill on the Council as an employer and service provider, and progress towards compliance with the Bill be noted.
- b) That officers be requested to provide a report at a future meeting of the Employment Committee once the Armed Forces Bill 2021/22 has been implemented.

11. Organisational Change Policy and Procedure: Action Plans.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive which presented the current Action Plans which contained provision for compulsory redundancy and details of progress made with their implementation. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 12' is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the update provided on the current Action Plans which contain provision for compulsory redundancy, and details of progress in their implementation, be noted.

12. Date of Next Meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Committee take place on Thursday 15 September 2022 at 10:00am.

10.00 - 11.05 am
26 May 2022

CHAIRMAN

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